

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. An adjustable nut cracker for applying a compressive force to crack a selected nut, comprising:

first and second nut engagement members;

5 a linking member including a slot having a plurality of wide slot portions interconnected by one or more narrow slot portions;

a first pin, the first nut engagement member being pivotally connected to the linking member by the first pin passing through the slot and the first nut engagement member, the first pin including a wide pin portion axially spaced  
10 from a narrow pin portion, the first pin being axially movable to selectively position the wide pin portion or the narrow pin portion in the slot, the narrow pin portion having a width less than a width of each narrow slot portion such that the narrow pin portion is movable within each narrow slot portion to a selected wide slot portion, the wide pin portion having a width greater than a width of each  
15 narrow slot portion and less than a width of each wide slot portion to prevent lateral movement of the pin when the wide pin portion is in the selected wide slot portion; and

the second nut engagement member being secured to the linking member and spaced apart from the first nut engagement member.

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2. An adjustable nut cracker as defined in Claim 1, further comprising:

a pin biasing member for axially biasing the first pin to urge the wide pin portion toward the slot.

25 3. An adjustable nut cracker as defined in Claim 2, wherein the biasing member is a coil spring.

4. An adjustable nut cracker as defined in Claim 1, further comprising:

a second pin for securing the second nut engagement member to the  
30 linking member.

5. An adjustable nut cracker as defined in Claim 4, wherein the second pin pivotally secures the second nut engagement member to the linking member.

5           6. An adjustable nut cracker as defined in Claim 4, wherein the second pin fixedly secures the second nut engagement member to the linking member such that the second nut engagement member is not pivotable with respect to the linking member.

10           7. An adjustable nut cracker as defined in Claim 1, further comprising:  
first and second nut gripping portions on each of the first and second nut engagement members, respectively, the nut gripping portions facing one another.

15           8. An adjustable nut cracker as defined in Claim 7, wherein at least one of the nut gripping portions comprises a depression for receiving a portion of the selected nut.

20           9. An adjustable nut cracker as defined in Claim 8, further comprising:  
one or more lateral projections within each depression, each lateral projection having a contact formation for contacting the selected nut when pivoting the first engagement member toward the second engagement member.

25           10. An adjustable nut cracker as defined in Claim 1, wherein at least one of the first and second nut engagement members comprises a handle sized to fit in a hand.

30           11. An adjustable nut cracker as defined in Claim 1, wherein at least one of the first and second nut engagement members comprises a base for supporting the nut cracker while resting on a flat, substantially horizontal surface.

12. An adjustable nut cracker as defined in Claim 11, wherein the base further comprises a skid-resistant bottom surface.

13. An adjustable nut cracker as defined in Claim 1, wherein the first or  
5 second nut engagement member further comprises:

a recess for at least partially receiving the linking member, the recess having opposing recess side walls oriented substantially parallel to a face of the linking member through which the slot passes and a recess back wall bridging the recess side walls.

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14. An adjustable nut cracker as defined in Claim 13, wherein the first nut engagement member includes the recess, and the first pin passes transversely through the opposing recess side walls.

15 15. An adjustable nut cracker as defined in Claim 13, wherein the back wall provides a stop for limiting pivoting of the respective nut engagement member.

16 16. An adjustable nut cracker as defined in Claim 13, wherein each of  
20 the first and second nut engagement members includes a recess for at least partially receiving the linking member, each recess having opposing recess side walls oriented substantially parallel to a face of the linking member through which the slot passes and a recess back wall bridging the recess side walls.

25 17. An adjustable nut cracker for applying a compressive force to crack a selected nut, comprising:

a linking member including a slot having a plurality of wide slot portions interconnected by one or more narrow slot portions;

first and second nut engagement members, each of the first and second  
30 nut engagement members including a recess for at least partially receiving the linking member, each recess having opposing recess side walls oriented

substantially parallel to a face of the linking member through which the slot passes and a recess back wall bridging the recess side walls, the back wall providing a stop for limiting pivoting of the respective nut engagement member;

a first pin, the first nut engagement member being pivotally connected to the linking member by the first pin passing through the slot and the first nut engagement member, the first pin including a wide pin portion axially spaced from a narrow pin portion, the first pin being axially movable to selectively position the wide pin portion or the narrow pin portion in the slot, the narrow pin portion having a width less than a width of each narrow slot portion such that the narrow pin portion is movable within each narrow slot portion to a selected wide slot portion, the wide pin portion having a width greater than a width of each narrow slot portion and less than a width of each wide slot portion to prevent lateral movement of the pin when the wide pin portion is in the selected wide slot portion;

a spring for axially biasing the first pin to urge the wide pin portion toward the slot;

the second nut engagement member being secured to the linking member with a second pin and spaced apart from the first nut engagement member; and

first and second nut gripping portions on each of the first and second nut engagement members, respectively, the nut gripping portions facing one another.

18. An adjustable nut cracker as defined in Claim 17, wherein the second pin pivotally secures the second nut engagement member to the linking member.

19. An adjustable nut cracker as defined in Claim 17, wherein the second pin fixedly secures the second nut engagement member to the linking member such that the second nut engagement member is not pivotable with respect to the linking member.

20. An adjustable nut cracker as defined in Claim 17, wherein at least one of the nut gripping portions comprises a depression for receiving a portion of the selected nut

5           21. An adjustable nut cracker as defined in Claim 20, further comprising:

          one or more lateral projections within each depression, each lateral projection having a contact formation for contacting the selected nut

10           22. An adjustable nut cracker as defined in Claim 17, wherein at least one of the first and second nut engagement members comprises a handle sized to fit in a hand.

          23. An adjustable nut cracker as defined in Claim 17, wherein at least  
15 one of the first and second nut engagement members comprises a base for supporting the nut cracker while resting on a flat, substantially horizontal surface.